

Prime Minister

NORTHERN IRELAND

1. You will have heard of the decision by the SDLP to contest the Northern Ireland Assembly elections which are to be held on Wednesday, 20th October, but to take no part in the proceedings of the Assembly.
2. Mr Frank Millar, who is Jim Molyneaux's Personal Assistant, telephoned on Jim's behalf this morning with a request that you should see Jim Molyneaux, in order to discuss the new situation which has arisen following the SDLP decision.
3. Mr Millar also passed on a request from Mr Molyneaux that Parliament should be re-called in order that the Northern Ireland Act 1982 should be amended, because if the SDLP does in fact refuse to participate in the new Assembly then ^{THE} cross community support provisions will become farcical.
4. Of course Jim Prior will be hoping that once the elections have taken place, the SDLP Members will participate, after all.
5. I suggest (subject to Jim Prior's views) that we should:-
 - (a) Reject the request that Parliament should be re-called.
 - (b) Suggest that Jim Molyneaux should see the Secretary of State, rather than you.

6. I remind you that this request was made on the telephone by Frank Millar on Jim Molyneaux's behalf. It would really be best if Jim Molyneaux was to write a letter and I could certainly suggest to Frank Millar that this is what should be done.
7. I would not be in the least surprised if the request made on Jim Molyneaux's behalf will be released to the Press.

(Note for the file: Frank Millar's telephone number is Belfast 224601)

26.8.82

IAN GOW

cc. Robin Butler
Willie Rickett